

Commander's Call Topics



Jan. 8, 2010

"Since the era of the Army Air Corps, Airmanship has been essential to U.S. military power. As the airpower arm of the United States, we will continue to provide those irreplaceable Airmanship skills for the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as for future conflicts."

– Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James A. Roy from his Jan. 6, 2010, [Enlisted Perspective: Airmen downrange doing a phenomenal job](#)

► FROM AIR FORCE SENIOR LEADERS

[SECAF outlines future](#)

Outlining the Air Force's future was the focus of Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley's Airmen's Call during his recent visit to Kadena Air Base, Japan. The secretary touched on the many challenges the Air Force faces now and will face in the future, to include supporting the joint fight, bolstering the service's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets and capabilities, and balancing the force.

"We're balancing our force to succeed in different types of warfare across the conflict spectrum," he said. "We can and must win the fights in front of us today and we're doing what it takes to be successful in Afghanistan. The inherent speed and range of airpower will help enable this."

► CURRENT ISSUES

[Air Force officials issue notice of intent for F-35 basing](#)

Air Force officials published the notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement to assess the potential environmental impacts to establish operational F-35 Lightning II aircraft at one or more existing Air Force and Air National Guard installations. The proposed basing alternatives include Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho; Hill AFB, Utah; Burlington Air Guard Station, Vt.; Shaw AFB/McEntire Joint National Guard Base, S.C.; and Jacksonville AGS, Fla.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Stop-loss payments continue, but some no longer eligible](#)

The fiscal 2010 defense budget extends payments to servicemembers involuntarily extended on active duty under the so-called "Stop Loss" program, but those who received a bonus for voluntarily re-enlisting or extending their service no longer qualify for retroactive stop-loss pay. Visit <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/stoploss/>.

[Retirement answers live with new AFPC Webinar series](#)

Air Force Personnel Center officials have launched a series of Web conferences, called Webinars, designed to provide retirement-eligible Airmen the information they need to submit their retirement applications. There are four Webinars in the series, held on a recurring basis: Retirements-101, for enlisted members; Retirements-101, for officers; Navigating the virtual MPF to submit a retirement application; and "I'm approved for retirement -- Now what?" Members view the Webinars using Defense Connect Online. For answers to any personnel questions call the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102 or DSN 665-5000.

[Program helps servicemembers transition to civilian life](#)

The Department of Defense's Transition Assistance Program works to prepare servicemembers and their families for a successful transition to civilian life. The program has five major components: pre-separation counseling, Department of Labor employment workshops, VA benefits briefings, the Disabled Transition Assistance Program and one-on-one counseling, all of which take place at local military installations and bases. TAP also has a Web site, www.turbotap.org, which offers a timeline on the transitioning process and other resources that help with the entire process.

Officials seek 10 enlisted for AFIT degree program

Air Force Institute of Technology officials are offering 10 NCOs the opportunity to pursue an advanced science, engineering or management degree at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, and nominations are due to the Air Force Personnel Center by Jan. 29, 2010. The program provides commanders with a diverse and renewable source of highly proficient and educated career NCOs. Nominations can be sent to afpc.dpafe.orgbox@randolph.af.mil.

GUARD AND RESERVE

Officials encourage Guard, Reserve to honor employers

Officials are asking Guard and Reserve servicemembers to speak out and honor their patriotic employers. One way is to nominate their employers for the Patriot Award at <http://www.esgr.org> and the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award at <http://www.freedomaward.mil>. The deadline for nominations is Jan. 18.

CIVILIAN

Nominations open for public service award for federal employees

Awards and decorations officials at the Air Force Personnel Center are seeking nominations for the William A. Jump Memorial Award. The annual award recognizes a federal employee for his or her outstanding service in administration and notable contributions to the efficiency and quality of public service. Nomination packages must be sent to AFPC by June 1. For more information, visit AFPC's ["Ask" Web site](#) or call the Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102.

FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

DePLAYment tags coming soon

Air Force Services Agency will be offering DePLAYment tags to families of deployed members through July 31, 2010, as part of the Year of the Air Force Family. Once registered, the tag-pass holder can use the tags to qualify for free and reduced fee programs, such as free youth classes, instructional classes, sports programs, hourly childcare, and family programs for the family left at home during deployment. Eligible members can log on to <http://www.myairforcelife.com> to see if their installation is participating and find out where to pick up their tags.

Three vaccines now available at Tricare network pharmacies

Beneficiaries can visit participating Tricare retail network pharmacies to receive seasonal flu, H1N1 flu and pneumonia vaccines at no cost. This expanded coverage is available to all beneficiaries eligible to use the Tricare retail pharmacy benefit. To locate a participating retail network pharmacy, go to <http://www.express-scripts.com/Tricare> or call Express Scripts at 877-363-1303.

New program helps Tricare beneficiaries battle lung diseases

Smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke are leading causes of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Tricare covers the tests necessary to diagnose COPD. Beneficiaries with any of the following risk factors should talk to their primary care manager about a COPD screening: Current and ex-smokers; those with a family history of emphysema; and those who have or had a job with exposure to dust, chemicals, fumes, smoke, gases or vapors. Tricare's regional contractors all offer COPD management programs

Think about family members if considering suicide

In 2008, the Air Force had 38 suicides, which equates to 11 suicides for every 100,000 Airmen. Those who consider suicide need to remember the family members they leave behind. Each military base offers a range of support agencies with people to help, such as mental health clinic professionals, the chaplain staff and the military family and life consultant. For more information, go to the Air Force Suicide Prevention Program Web site at <http://afspp.afms.mil>.

FINANCES AND EDUCATION

DFAS to release 2009 tax statements via myPay and mail

Military service members, military retirees and annuitants, and federal civilian employees paid by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, can expect to receive their 2009 tax statements soon. DFAS customers with myPay access will be able to retrieve their tax statements electronically up to two weeks sooner than those relying on regular mail delivery. Visit the link above for tax statement distribution dates.

RESOURCES

AF.mil

<http://www.af.mil>

Air Force Community

<http://www.afcommunity.af.mil/>

Air Force Highlights

<http://www.afoutreach.af.mil/usafhighlights/index.asp>

Military OneSource

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/>

Military HOMEFRONT

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>

Year of the Air Force Family

<http://www.af.mil/yoaff/index.asp>
www.MyAirForceLife.com

Air Force Personnel Center

<http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

Air Reserve Personnel Center

<http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/>

Department of Defense

<http://www.defense.gov>

Department of Defense News

<http://www.defenselink.mil>

TRICARE

<http://www.tricare.mil>

U.S. Government Web site

<http://www.firstgov.gov/>

AIR FORCE HERITAGE TO HORIZONS

This Week in Air Force History

Jan. 1, 1957 – Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, became the single site for Air Force basic training.

Jan. 8, 1973 – An F-4D Phantom shot down a MiG southwest of Hanoi with a radar-guided AIM-7 missile. This is the last aerial victory before the signing of the cease-fire that would go into effect Jan. 29.

Jan. 9, 1976 – The 1st Tactical Fighter Wing, Langley Air Force Base, Va., received its first F-15 Eagle.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit the Air Force Link heritage section at

<http://www.af.mil/information/heritage>.

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